

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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STATE OF MAINE
127TH LEGISLATURE
FIRST REGULAR SESSION



Summaries of bills, adopted amendments and laws enacted or finally passed

**JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND
HUMAN SERVICES**

August 2015

STAFF:

ANNA BROOME, LEGISLATIVE ANALYST
MICHAEL O'BRIEN, LEGISLATIVE ANALYST
OFFICE OF POLICY AND LEGAL ANALYSIS
13 STATE HOUSE STATION
AUGUSTA, ME 04333
(207) 287-1670

AND

LUKE LAZURE, LEGISLATIVE ANALYST
OFFICE OF FISCAL AND PROGRAM REVIEW
5 STATE HOUSE STATION
AUGUSTA, ME 04333
(207) 287-1635

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STATE OF MAINE

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LEGISLATIVE DIGEST OF BILL SUMMARIES AND ENACTED LAWS

This *Legislative Digest of Bill Summaries and Enacted Laws* contains summaries of all LDs and adopted amendments and all laws enacted or finally passed during the First Regular Session of the 127th Maine Legislature.

The *Digest* is arranged alphabetically by committee and within each committee by Legislative Document (LD) number. The committee report(s), prime sponsor and lead co-sponsor(s), if designated, are listed below each LD title. All adopted amendments are summarized and listed by paper number. A subject index is included with each committee. An appendix provides a summary of relevant session statistics.

Final action on each LD is noted to the right of the LD title. The following describes the various final actions.

CARRIED OVER carried over to a subsequent session of the Legislature
CON RES XXX..... chapter # of constitutional resolution passed by both houses
CONF CMTE UNABLE TO AGREE..... Committee of Conference unable to agree; legislation died
DIED BETWEEN HOUSES..... House & Senate disagreed; legislation died
DIED IN CONCURRENCE..... defeated in each house, but on different motions; legislation died
DIED ON ADJOURNMENT..... action incomplete when session ended; legislation died
EMERGENCY..... enacted law takes effect sooner than 90 days after session adjournment
FAILED, EMERGENCY ENACTMENT or FINAL PASSAGE emergency failed to receive required 2/3 vote
FAILED, ENACTMENT or FINAL PASSAGE..... failed to receive final majority vote
FAILED, MANDATE ENACTMENT legislation proposing local mandate failed required 2/3 vote
HELD BY GOVERNOR..... Governor has not signed; final disposition to be determined at subsequent session
LEAVE TO WITHDRAW..... sponsor's request to withdraw legislation granted
NOT PROPERLY BEFORE THE BODY ruled out of order by the presiding officer; legislation died
INDEF PP..... indefinitely postponed; legislation died
ONTP, ACCEPTED, MAJORITY, MINORITY or REPORT X... ought-not-to-pass report accepted; legislation died
P&S XXX..... chapter # of enacted private & special law
PUBLIC XXX..... chapter # of enacted public law
RESOLVE XXX..... chapter # of finally passed resolve
VETO SUSTAINED..... Legislature failed to override Governor's veto

The effective date for non-emergency legislation enacted in the First Regular Session of the 127th Legislature is October 15, 2015. The effective date for legislation enacted as an emergency measure may be found in the enacted law summary for that legislation.

Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services

LD 1402 An Act To Reward Work Performed by Welfare Recipients

**Died Between
Houses**

<u>Sponsor(s)</u>	<u>Committee Report</u>	<u>Amendments Adopted</u>
FREDETTE THIBODEAU	OTP-AM OTP-AM	

This bill revises the earnings from employment the Department of Health and Human Services disregards when determining benefit levels for recipients under the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program in order to provide recipients who are working with a greater earnings disregard depending on the amount of hours they work per week and whether or not they are meeting federal work participation requirements. The bill also increases the number of months eligible individuals may receive transitional transportation benefits from 12 months to 18 months. The bill also authorizes the Department of Health and Human Services, beginning in fiscal year 2016-17, to use \$500,000 from the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families block grant to promote financial literacy and healthy saving habits of families with income less than 200 percent of the federal poverty guidelines by placing funds in family development accounts.

Committee Amendment "A" (H-420)

This amendment, which is the majority report of the committee, modifies the section of the bill relating to determination of benefit levels and eligibility for the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program, or TANF. It provides that a gross income test may only be applied to applicants and not recipients of assistance. It also directs the Department of Health and Human Services, in determining benefit levels, to disregard the following amounts of earnings:

1. For a recipient employed 40 or more hours per week and who meets work participation requirements as defined in federal TANF rules, 100 percent of the gross earned income for the first full month of employment and the next consecutive month of employment, 75 percent of the gross earned income for the next six consecutive months of employment and \$108 and 50 percent of the remaining gross earned income for each additional consecutive month of employment thereafter;
2. For a recipient employed less than 40 hours per week and who meets work participation requirements as defined in federal TANF rules, 100 percent of the gross earned income for the first full month of employment, 75 percent of the gross earned income for the next six consecutive months of employment and \$108 and 50 percent of the remaining gross earned income for each additional consecutive month of employment thereafter;
3. For all other recipients with earnings from employment, \$108 and 50 percent of the remaining earnings; and
4. All actual child care costs necessary for work, except that the department may limit the amount disregarded for actual child care costs to \$175 per month per child or \$200 per month per child under two years of age or with special needs.

This amendment also provides that if an applicant for child care programs is determined eligible, child care assistance must be provided retroactively to the date of application. The amendment adds an appropriations and allocations section.

Committee Amendment "B" (H-421)

This amendment, which is the minority report of the committee, provides that if an applicant for child care programs is determined eligible, child care assistance must be provided retroactively to the date of application. The amendment adds an appropriations and allocations section.